Remarks

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement and rejection set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14 remain pending in the application, with Claims 1-4, 9, 11, 13 and 14 being independent. Claims 1-8 have been amended herein.

Initially, Applicant requests that the Examiner acknowledge the claim to foreign priority and the submission of the two priority documents. These priority documents were submitted with a Submission of Priority Documents on March 13, 2002. A copy of the postcard receipt acknowledging receipt of the Submission of Priority Documents and the priority documents themselves and a reexecuted copy of the Submission of Priority Documents are enclosed for the Examiner's convenience.

The Examiner has stated that the inventions of Group I (Claims 1-8) and Group II (Claims 9-14) are patentably distinct from each other because they are unrelated. However, Applicant respectfully submits that the two groups of claims are closely related and that a proper search of any of the claims of one group would likely include a search of the claims of the other group. Thus, it is submitted that all of the claims can be searched simultaneously and that a duplicative search with possibly inconsistent results may occur if the restriction requirement is maintained. Therefore, in the interest of economy, both for the Office and Applicant, withdrawal of the restriction requirement is respectfully solicited.

Nevertheless, in order to comply with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.143, Applicant confirms election of the claims of Group I, namely Claims 1-8.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that Claims 1-3 are allowed. Although minor amendments to these claims have been made herein, such changes are not believed to affect the allowability of the claims and were not made for any reasons related to patentability. Thus, Claims 1-3 are believed to remain in condition for allowance. Incidentally, the reasons for allowance discussed at page 5 of the Office Action refer to Claims 1 and 2, but are presumed to be directed to Claim 3.

Applicant also notes with appreciation the indication that Claims 7 and 8 recite allowable subject matter. These claims were objected to for being dependent upon rejected base claims. However, these claims will not be rewritten in independent form at this time because independent Claim 4 is believed to be allowable for the reasons discussed below.

Claims 4-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,239,817 (Meyer). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As is recited in independent Claim 4, the present invention relates to an ink jet recording apparatus for performing recording by conveying a recording medium between a recording head for executing recording by discharging recording liquid droplets and a platen disposed to face the recording head. The apparatus includes a first rib row in a direction intersecting a conveying direction of the recording medium, including a plurality of ribs on the platen, and a second rib row in a direction intersecting the conveying direction of the recording medium, including a plurality of ribs on the platen.

The ribs of the second rib row are arranged differently from the ribs of the first rib row, and disposed downstream of the first rib row with respect to the recording medium conveying direction. A recording operation is performed on a leading end or a rear end of the recording medium, with respect to the conveying direction, by positioning the leading end or the rear end of the recording medium on the first rib row and performing recording except for recording data corresponding to a position of each rib of the first rib row, then positioning the leading end or the rear end of the recording medium in the conveying direction on the second rib row and performing recording except for recording data corresponding to a position of each rib of the second rib row.

Meyer relates to an ink jet printer that can print a borderless image. Platen 30 includes front ribs 35 and rear ribs 37 with an absorbent therebetween. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Meyer of at least a recording operation being performed on a leading end or a rear end of a recording medium by positioning the leading end or the rear end of the recording medium on a first rib row and performing recording except for recording data corresponding to a position of each rib of the first rib row, then positioning the leading end or the rear end of the recording medium on a second rib row and performing recording except for recording data corresponding to a position of each rib of the second rib row, as is recited in independent Claim 4.

Thus, Meyer fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claim 4.

Thus, independent Claim 4 is also patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejection are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1-4. Dependent Claims 5-8 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in independent Claim 4. Individual consideration of these dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the restriction requirement and the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,
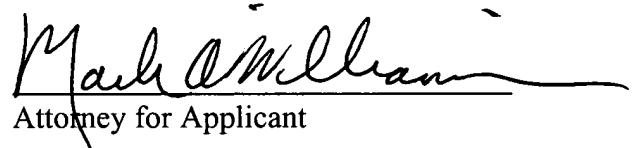
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- 13 -